

RED WIZARD ENCOUNTERS

THE MONOLITH OF KAL'DORAM

There are few things more concerning than that which we cannot affect. Environmental phenomena happen whether we want them to or not. One phenomena in particular that has been utilised more than most in the building of suspense, uncertainty and horror is fog. It envelops everything it comes into contact with and obscures the vision of everyone either inside it or attempting to see through it. This encounter exemplifies the idea that we cannot affect nature and that to attempt it will only work against you.

This encounter is designed as a difficult encounter with no particular level in mind. It can be applied to characters of any level. This is not a particularly long encounter, but it is designed to increase tension by attacking the PC's stats directly.

BACKGROUND

Kal'doram was a powerful mage and protector of a large village of technologically advanced people who was killed many, many years ago. A great hag descended from the hills in an attempt to eradicate the village because she believed the frail mortals unworthy of such power. Her attempt to destroy the town was met with failure at the hands of Kal'doram, though it cost them both their lives. The villagers erected a great monolith, depicting the tales and legends of their heroic protector, and imbued it with the power to protect the village again in times of need, though it cost them much of their magical ability to do so. After emerging from their hiding place, the remainder of the hag's coven descended on the village to attempt to destroy or deface the monolith but found it beyond their abilities to achieve. Instead, they placed a horrible curse on the area, a deathly pall in the form of a mist that would drain the very life out of any who attempted to commune with it.

ENCOUNTER

As the characters approach, read or paraphrase the following:

"As you pass through the forest, the area opens up into a large clearing ending in a cliff that would normally overlook the valley below. Instead, all you can see around is a dense fog, deathly white with momentary swirls of pallid green. Ahead of you is the large structure that you came here for, an enormous stone monolith standing 25 ft. high, looming menacingly above the mist.

Before you lie stairs that descend into the fog, only to disappear from view a scant few feet in. At the edges of the platform that holds the monolith, you see another staircase ascending from the fog. It seems you must descend into the unknown if you wish to make it to your goal."

The players have been employed by the villagers to activate the monolith, with the reasoning that the villagers are neither strong enough nor brave enough to enter the mist. They have seen the effects of someone attempting it and that person came back almost entirely drained of life.

This is a fairly straight forward encounter but it can be very dangerous due to the life draining nature of the fog. Once players descend into the fog, at the end of each of their turns, their Constitution score is reduced by 1. Once they ascend the steps out of the fog, this effect ends. This will likely not be too deadly yet but will serve as a precursor for what's to come. The PC's

constitution is restored after 1d4 days, in line with the damage taken by the Aspects of the Mist detailed below.

Once they ascend the stairs onto the platform, they find themselves being assaulted by embodiments of the mist itself. At initiative count 20 on every round, 1d4 Aspects of the Mist appear at the edges of the platform, slowly encroaching on the players. The number of creatures generated can be increased for higher level parties, e.g. 1d6 for levels 7-9, 1d8 for levels 10-12, etc. You can also add modifiers, both positive or negative, to the roll if the players are having trouble managing the number of Aspects on the platform.

The goal of this encounter is to activate the monolith in the centre, which simply takes three successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks of DC 16 to speak the incantations written into the stone. This is not particularly high, though this too can be increased for stronger parties. The monolith also has the ability to disperse evil in a local area, destroying all Aspects currently on the platform. This does not require a check, but the player must use an action to speak the command word which is written at the base of the pillar.

Once three successful Intelligence (Arcana) checks have been made, the pillar becomes suffused with a golden light, sending beams into the mist, instantly dispersing it. It then sends a shockwave of magical energy radiating outwards, which goes on to encompass the entire town. Anything that is attacking the town is pushed back, unable to stop the wave of magical energy that approaches. Any creature that is either fiend or undead is instantly destroyed, turning to ash as the shockwave passes through them. This only affects creature types, meaning that a full demon or devil would be destroyed but a Tiefling, which is a humanoid, remains unaffected. The magical energy stops just outside of the town, turning into a protective barrier that lasts 1d6 days. This barrier is impervious to all physical or magical damage and can't be dispelled.

CONCLUSION

The villagers heap their praises upon the PC's, knowing that the monolith is only to be activated in times of dire need and that as a result they have just saved the town and spared many lives. They are more than happy to reward the players handsomely for their deeds, including potentially giving them magical items from times long past. One such item could include the [Amulet of the Dawn](#), which possesses a small portion of the power of the monolith itself.

BESTIARY

Aspect of the Mist

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 14 (4d6)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Condition

Immunities Blinded, Deafened, Frightened, Grappled, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious



Senses Blindsight 60 ft., Passive Perception 9

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Amorphous. The shadow can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Actions

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Constitution score is reduced by 1d4 - 1 (minimum 1). The target dies if this reduces its Constitution to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts 1d4 days.

Map

